

UCLA Faculty Association

News and opinion from Dan Mitchell since 2009

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Monday, September 16, 2024

Retirement Information Programs



Two online programs for those considering retirement in the near future are available this month:

Retiree Health Benefits

This webinar is intended for those considering retirement from UC within the next 4-12 months. We'll provide an in-depth review of the eligibility rules for retiree health coverage, your health plan options

(including Medicare coordination), how to determine your premiums and answers to commonly asked questions.

Date: Wednesday, September 18, 2024

Time: 2:00 p.m. – 4:00 p.m.

https://ucop.zoom.us/webinar/register/WN_KpETRz4EQVS-DoKDp9OA_w#/registration

The UC Retirement Process – From Start to Finish

This webinar is meant for UCRP members who are planning to retire within the next 4-12 months. We'll explain everything you need to know about the retirement process, including required forms, important deadlines and helpful resources.

Date: Thursday, September 26, 2024

Time: 10:00 a.m. – noon

https://ucop.zoom.us/webinar/register/WN_07WWiZhIR-GEV3GyNXrfgg#/registration

Posted by California Policy Issues at [5:30 AM](#) No comments:

Labels: [health care](#), [uc retirement](#)

Medicare Advantage Scrutiny Continues - Part 4 (another straw in the wind)



Note: Privatized Medicare Advantage plans now cover over half of all Medicare participants. Many UC retirees have chosen the Medicare Advantage plan offered by UC, because it is less expensive than the traditional Medicare supplement plans. Recently, the feds seem to have become aware of evidence that Medicare has been overpaying commercial insurance companies

for providing these plans and a crackdown on such payments has begun. That may account for the development reported below. Absent the *de facto* subsidy for the plans from the overpayments, commercial insurance companies may either raise their costs and/or begin to pull out of the market.

From [Newsweek](#): *More than 500,000 Americans are scheduled to lose their Medicare Advantage plans now that major insurer Humana is leaving 13 markets across the country. The company's Chief Financial Officer Susan Diamond made the announcement during a Wells Fargo Healthcare Conference this month, saying roughly 560,000 members would need to find a new plan. That impacts roughly 10 percent of its Medicare Advantage participants...*

Full story at <https://www.newsweek.com/more-500000-americans-set-lose-their-medicare-advantage-plans-1952164>.

Posted by California Policy Issues at [3:30 AM](#) No comments:

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Remaking the University

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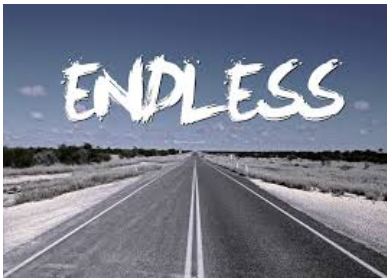
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Labels: [health care](#), [politics](#), [uc retirement](#)

The (Seemingly) Endless Story - Part 2



It may be hard to recall, given all the things that have happened since this past April when we last had a blog entry about Harvard's Francesca Gino case. Probably the best way to re-acquaint yourself with this tale is to type "Gino" into the search engine that goes with this blog. But in essence, she was a rising, or maybe risen, star prof at the Harvard B-school specializing in empirical behavioral research on such subjects as honesty. Then, allegations of manipulated data in

her studies were made by outside researchers, investigated by Harvard, and found by Harvard to be credible.

She sued the researchers who had brought their evidence to Harvard's attention. The [Wall St. Journal](#) reports that the defamation case against those researchers has been dismissed:

A university investigation concluding that Harvard Business School faculty member Francesca Gino's research contained manipulated data led to her being placed on unpaid administrative leave last year. A federal judge has dismissed defamation claims lodged by a Harvard Business School professor in a lawsuit against the university and outside critics of her work.

Francesca Gino, at the time a star Harvard Business School faculty member, argued that her career and reputation were ruined by accusations that four of her studies contained falsified data. The allegations were published online by three behavioral scientists who blogged at the website Data Colada. Separately, an investigative report by the university concluded that Gino's work contained manipulated data and led to her being placed on unpaid administrative leave last year.

On Wednesday, a judge of the U.S. District Court for the District of Massachusetts ruled that the criticisms were protected by the First Amendment...

The judge allowed some of Gino's claims in the case, involving the university's actions regarding her employment, to stand...

Full story at <https://www.wsj.com/science/harvard-francesca-gino-defamation-claims-dismissed-b755a88a>.

Posted by California Policy Issues at 3:00 AM No comments:      

Labels: [academic freedom](#), [Harvard](#)

Sunday, September 15, 2024

Satanic Mills (of the term paper variety)





From [Inside Higher Ed](#): *Internet giants have been urged to block advertisements for contract cheating websites by a global alliance of higher education regulators.*

The Global Academic Integrity Network (GAIN), representing 40 standards agencies, has written to platforms including Google, X and LinkedIn, urging them to "take a stand and join the fight against academic dishonesty" by blocking links to essay mills, which allow students to pay someone to write an assignment on their behalf... GAIN's open letter warns that recent years "have witnessed a proliferation in the marketing and promotion of online cheating services across digital platforms."

It invites internet giants to form a partnership with higher education regulators to review and uphold community guidelines on essay mills, arguing that this would "significantly reduce the visibility and impact of essay mills and contract cheating services and send a powerful message worldwide about the value of legitimate academic achievements." ...

Full story at <https://www.insidehighered.com/news/students/academics/2024/09/13/block-essay-mill-ads-global-regulators-urge-internet-giants>.

But wait! Maybe the choice is now letting the paper-writing mills - that provide employment for folks, often in third-world countries where jobs are scarce - do the writing, or letting chatGPT kill all those traditional jobs. After all, the paper-writing mills' products can be viewed as "skilled artisanal, hand-crafted" essays, an artform endangered by cheap report-writing machines. If we don't preserve the mills, our grandchildren will never experience the art of hiring someone - a real flesh-and-blood person! - to write a term paper. Just saying...

Posted by California Policy Issues at 3:30 AM No comments:      

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Adverse Internet Archive Appellate Decision



From time to time, this blog has reported on the Internet Archive and the litigation against it regarding lending of books and records. (Note that we use the Internet Archive to preserve Regents meetings and other items for this blog.)

Inside Higher Ed notes that a recent appellate decision adverse to the Internet Archive could affect practices at UC and other

universities:







Pandemic-era library programs that helped students access books online could be potentially threatened by an appeals court ruling last week. Libraries across the country, from Carnegie Mellon University to the University of California system, turned to what's known as a digital or controlled lending program in 2020, which gave students a way to borrow books that weren't otherwise available. Those programs are small in scale and largely experimental but part of a broader shift in modernizing the university library.

But the appeals court ruling could upend those programs. Federal judges ruled that the Internet Archive's pandemic-era online library violated federal copyright law. The Internet Archive, a nonprofit that also runs the popular Wayback Machine that archives websites, digitized thousands of books and loaned them out for free. The specific implications are still unclear. College libraries typically deal with research or out-of-print materials and adhere to different practices.

Still, librarians at colleges and elsewhere, along with other experts, feared that the long-running legal fight between the Internet Archive and leading publishers could imperil the ability of libraries to own and preserve books, among other ramifications. The appeals court ruling comes more than a year and a half after a federal district judge also ruled against the Internet Archive —a decision the organization said was tantamount to "book burning."

The lawsuit created divides beyond those directly involved, with other publishers, authors and academic groups weighing in. Those in favor of the Internet Archive, including hundreds of authors and several academics, viewed the lawsuit as an attack on libraries in a digital age, and they worry about the future of the organization. Those against the Internet Archive's practices viewed its activity as piracy...

Full story at <https://www.insidehighered.com/news/tech-innovation/libraries/2024/09/09/internet-archives-court-loss-leaves-higher-ed-gray-area>.

Posted by California Policy Issues at 3:00 AM No comments:      

Labels: [Carnegie Mellon](#), [miscellaneous](#), [UC](#)

Saturday, September 14, 2024

Need for a New Master Plan - Once Again - Part 3



UC President Clark Kerr hands Master Plan to Gov. Pat Brown

From time to time, this blog has pointed out the need for a new Master Plan for Higher Ed - the old one which everyone pays homage to dates back to 1960 and expired in 1975 - to deal with who does what among the three segments of public high education.* Otherwise, we will continue to get *ad hoc* policies made by the legislature without the larger view in mind.

From CalMatters: ...Two bills passed by the Legislature last week focus on... nurses with bachelor's degrees. Both target a growing demand for nurses to possess bachelor's

degrees by allowing some community colleges to issue them. Presently the colleges only provide associate degrees — generally the minimum degree needed to be a registered nurse.

The bills are the latest developments in the state's ongoing quest to tweak the educational offerings of colleges and universities to address cultural and workforce needs, from requiring ethnic studies courses to permitting colleges and universities to issue degrees they haven't before. But the bills also underscore the complexity of both identifying a labor force problem — a nursing shortage — and the role that community colleges and universities play in graduating skilled workers.

One is Senate Bill 895 by Sen. Richard Roth, a Democrat from Riverside.** The other is Assembly Bill 2104 by Assemblymember Esmeralda Soria, a Democrat from Merced.***

The California State University opposes both bills, viewing them as undermining a promise lawmakers made two years ago that community colleges wouldn't issue bachelor's degrees that duplicate existing Cal State programs, among other worries. Private colleges oppose the bills, as well. The University of California doesn't officially oppose the bills but raised similar concerns.

Full story at <https://calmatters.org/education/higher-education/2024/09/nursing-shortage/>.


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*<https://uclafacultyassociation.blogspot.com/2024/03/need-for-new-master-plan-once-again.html>.

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- Contributors
-  California Policy Issues
 -  Toby Higbie
 -  UCLA Faculty Association

******https://leginfo.ca.gov/faces/billTextClient.xhtml?bill_id=202320240SB895. This bill would require the office of the Chancellor of the California Community Colleges to develop a Baccalaureate Degree in Nursing Pilot Program that authorizes select community college districts to offer a Bachelor of Science in Nursing degree. The bill would limit the pilot program to 10 community college districts statewide and would require the chancellor's office to identify and select eligible community college districts based on specified criteria.

*******<https://legiscan.com/CA/text/AB2104/2023>. This bill would require the Chancellor of the California Community Colleges to develop a Baccalaureate Degree in Nursing Pilot Program that authorizes select community college districts to offer a Bachelor of Science in Nursing degree. The bill would limit the pilot program to 10 community college districts statewide and would require the chancellor to identify eligible community college districts based on specified criteria.

Posted by California Policy Issues at [6:30 AM](#) No comments:



Labels: [community colleges](#), [CSU](#), [health care](#), [Master Plan](#), [UC](#)

UCLA can be as neutral as the rest of them



UCLA set up a working group on making official statements and - along with all the others - it suggested neutrality:

UCLA STATEMENT ON STATEMENTS

September 2024

UCLA exists to create and share knowledge for the public good. The university's leaders are stewards of this mission and have a responsibility to create an environment in which freedom of expression is protected, celebrated and cherished. To accomplish that goal, UCLA's practices, rules and policies must encourage the widest diversity of views, allowing all of its community members a broad latitude to speak, write, listen, inquire, challenge and learn. Our mission and values compel this:

UCLA's primary purpose as a public research university is the creation, dissemination, preservation and application of knowledge for the betterment of our global society.

To fulfill this mission, UCLA is committed to academic freedom in its fullest terms: We value open access to information, free and lively debate conducted with mutual respect for individuals, and freedom from intolerance. In all of our pursuits, we strive for excellence and diversity, recognizing that openness and inclusion produce true quality.

These values underlie our three institutional responsibilities: education, research and public service.

Given the increasing pressure on university leaders to make official statements about societal, political and public matters, the UCLA Statement on Statements Working Group was convened in the summer of 2024 to determine whether issuing such statements was in alignment with UCLA's mission and values. The working group was charged with recommending guidelines for when the institutional voice of UCLA should and should not be utilized to address societal, political and public matters.

We recommend that, moving forward, university leaders should not make statements on societal, political and public matters unless those matters directly affect the university's ability to support a research and educational environment where free expression thrives.

Below we offer several key reasons for this recommended shift:

Foremost, limiting the use of the university's institutional voice is intended to enhance freedom of speech, inquiry and expression across the UCLA community.

Members of the UCLA campus possess a great variety of thoughts and beliefs, reflecting the diverse backgrounds, identities and perspectives of our students, faculty and staff. But statements from university leaders on societal, political and public matters can stifle a free exchange of ideas and risk making some parts of our diverse community feel silenced or unheard. When university leaders issue such statements, they risk being seen as attempting to represent the entire community on societal, political and public matters, and our commitment to inclusive excellence may be undermined. By refraining from expressing an institutional perspective, we better protect the open exchange of ideas among those on our campus — something that is foundational to our identity as an academic institution — and we avoid the potential to make parts of our diverse community feel unheard or disrespected.

UCLA's purpose as a public university is to create spaces for conversations that are meaningful, thoughtful and engaging — not to preempt those conversations with official statements.

We also believe this recommendation to restrict the use of institutional voice aligns with the skills and responsibilities of university leaders. These leaders are expected to be adept at leading an institution: their job is to ensure academic excellence; to stimulate effective and

meaningful research; to advance new ideas; to protect the university’s mission; to set the ground rules and to create an environment that promotes academic freedom. To best serve the university, campus leaders’ focus, activities, resources and communications should connect to these core academic and institutional objectives.

Issuing statements on matters that do not directly affect the university’s ability to support a research and educational environment where free expression thrives can distract from the pursuit of core university priorities. But there are other considerations at play as well: University leaders may not — indeed likely will not — have enough expertise in a relevant subject to weigh in on societal, political and public matters. Furthermore, putting out statements on certain issues creates greater and greater pressure to put out statements on other issues, requiring an ever increasing amount of time and resources.

We recommend above that university leaders should refrain from making statements on societal, public and political matters, unless those matters directly affect the university’s ability to support a research and educational environment where free expression thrives. Whether — and if so, how — a contentious issue relates to this essential mission of the university will itself be disputed at times; as with any general rule, this one would require university officials to exercise judgment in good faith, subject to critique by community members. In borderline cases, the presumption should be for not issuing a statement. We note that even when events happen that meet the threshold for comment by university administrators, stakeholders should realize that statements and judgments will come at a slower pace than some might desire because we are committed to accuracy and due process, and it takes time to get both facts and context.

Our recommendation applies to the chancellor, executive vice chancellor and provost, vice chancellors, vice provosts and deans. When these individuals speak or share written messages, members of our community may understand them to be doing so on behalf of the university (or their academic school or college).

By intention, our recommendation does not extend to department chairs and heads of academic programs, centers and institutes. There are often similar reasons for these leaders to be reluctant to issue statements so as not to exert pressure, however inadvertent, on how the discussion of important issues unfolds in their units, and so as not to risk any misimpression that they speak for others.

At the same time, we are also aware that the roles of chairs and programmatic heads differ from those of other university leaders in ways that are defined by their academic expertise on external matters and that, therefore, touch more closely on academic freedom. If these individuals do make statements, drawn from expertise and relevant to their work or role, they should make clear that they do not speak on behalf of the university. Additionally, all statements should adhere to the UC Regents Policy on Public and Discretionary Statements by Academic Units.

We make this recommendation realizing it may be in some tension with our other values.

Drawing a boundary around what university leaders use institutional voice to speak about (and not speak about) could be perceived or felt as regressive in terms of inclusivity, and evince an unwillingness to speak out on behalf of historically marginalized groups or on important geopolitical crises. Nevertheless, we believe this is the proper course, precisely because we wish to protect free speech for all community members, including marginalized and minoritized groups, and to ensure that they have the opportunity to articulate their positions unfettered by the imperatives that govern the institutional voice.

Ultimately, we seek to build a culture of trust, and commitment to our mission, which involves practicing and teaching real dialogue. We believe, in the end, that what we do is more important than what we say. We should strive, in our daily practice, to model dialogue and work through differences.

UCLA Statement on Statements Working Group

Michael Waterstone, Dean, School of Law, Working Group Chair

Tony Bernardo, Dean, Anderson School of Management

Monroe Gorden, Vice Chancellor, Student Affairs

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Source: <https://ia800402.us.archive.org/9/items/2-final-hjaa-report.-the-soil-beneath-the-encampments/UCLA-STATEMENT-ON-STATEMENTS.pdf>.

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